West Africa Ebola Crisis

Situation Report #11

Reporting period 01/05/15 to 31/05/15

These Situation Reports are distributed monthly. The next report will be issued on or around 30/06/15.

The Emergency Telecommunications (ET) Cluster has not been activated in response to the Ebola outbreak in West Africa. As there are clear needs across the three affected countries for ICT services, the UN Mission for Ebola Emergency Response (UNMEER) has mandated the World Food Programme (WFP), as global ET Cluster lead, to respond as if the cluster was activated. The ET Cluster, its partners and membership are responding together for a coordinated response.

Regional Highlights

- On May 9, Liberia was declared Ebola-free by the World Health Organisation (WHO). During the first two weeks of May the rate of new Ebola cases in Sierra Leone and Guinea decreased significantly, however, in the second half of the month a new peak of Ebola cases was reported in some districts. According to needs assessed on the ground, Emergency Telecommunications (ET) Cluster is reviewing its operations especially in locations where there have been zero cases of Ebola for 42 days or more.
    - o In districts where there have been zero cases for the past 42 days or more, the ET Cluster is demobilising and retrieving internet connectivity equipment.
    - o In districts where there have been Ebola cases registered in the past 42 days, services are continuing.

- The ET Cluster is providing internet services to 83x humanitarian facilities across the three affected countries of Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone. Since the beginning of the operation, more than 2,700 users have accessed internet networks set up by the ET Cluster.
    - o Humanitarian facilities include Ebola Treatment Units (ETUs), Logistics Bases and NGO offices where the response community is reporting that such services have allowed them to save time and to be more efficient in their work to help local communities fight Ebola.

- The ET Cluster is providing radio services in 18x towns across Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone ensuring access to secure telecommunications for Ebola responders. Staff from various response organizations have received radio training, building local capacity.

- At the end of May, Ivan Thomas was replaced by Pastor Lovo as Sierra Leone ICT Coordinator, and Michael Dirksen was replaced by Roberto Salazar as Guinea ICT Coordinator. Rami Shakra assumed the role of Regional ICT Coordinator for the Ebola response, while continuing to coordinate the operation in Liberia.

Country Updates

Guinea

- The ET Cluster in Guinea is providing internet services to 14x humanitarian facilities across Guinea.
    - Since the beginning of the operation, the ET Cluster has provided internet to 94x users in N'zerekore and Macenta.
    - ET Cluster partner Ericsson Response WIDER kits, to distribute and mange internet connectivity, are installed in Macenta and N'zerekore.
- In partnership with UN Department of Safety and Security (UNDSS), the ET Cluster is providing the response community with radio coverage across Conakry, Kissidougou, Gueckedou, Macenta and N'zerekore.
- The ET Cluster received 4x out of the 8x new 24-metre towers. An assessment mission was conducted in the locations where they will be installed. The remaining four towers are being sent by sea from Accra to Conakry and expected to arrive in mid-June.
- The ET Cluster has requested local Internet Service Providers to carry out assessments with a view to replacing ET Cluster equipment and services at ETUs in Beyla, Coyah, Conakry (Nongo) and N'zerekore.
- Issues with satellite equipment for internet connectivity at Plan and Red Cross offices as well as at the ETU in Macenta have been resolved.

Liberia

- The ET Cluster in Liberia is providing internet services to 22x humanitarian facilities across Liberia.
    - 200x humanitarian staff have used ET Cluster internet services since the beginning of the operation.
- In partnership with UN Department of Safety and Security (UNDSS), the ET Cluster is providing the response community with radio coverage across Monrovia, Buchanan, Harper, Gbarnga, Voinjama, Saclepea, Zwedru, Foya and Tubmanburg.
- After the country was declared Ebola-free on May 9, ET Cluster operations have officially entered the transition phase.
    - As part of the transition strategy, the ET Cluster organized radio training, which was attended by 68x responders from 7x humanitarian organizations.
- The ET Cluster is working on the extension of the Memorandum of Understanding with the UN Mission in Liberia (UNMIL) regarding the provision of connectivity at the Roberts International Airport Main Logistics Base (MLB) and the Samuel Kanyon Doe Sports Stadium MLB in Monrovia, as well as Gbarnga, Voinjama, Zwedru, Buchanan and Harper Forward Logistics Bases (FLBs). The

arrangement will be similar to the previous arrangement between UNMIL and UNMEER and will cover the period July to December 2015.

- ET Cluster is exploring the possibility to install HF radio between MSB's clinics and hub, as there is no adequate mobile network coverage.

Sierra Leone

- The ET Cluster in Sierra Leone is currently providing internet services to 42x humanitarian facilities.
  - Since the beginning of the operation, more than 2,400 users have accessed ETC Cluster internet services.
- The ET Cluster has upgraded radio telecommunications infrastructure in Freetown, Koidu, Makeni, and Bo.
- As the number of Ebola cases decreases, the ET Cluster is reevaluating the requirement for continued services, especially if locations are now Ebola free.
  - The ET Cluster's connectivity services have been decommissioned in Ebola-free districts of Bo, Bonte, Kenema and Koido.
  - The ET Cluster shipped 165Kg of Ericsson Response equipment back to Sweden.
- In line with the upcoming phase-out process, the ET Cluster and the National Ebola Response Centre (NERC) authorities are working on the Transition Protocol, with the aim of ensuring a smooth transition to local providers as well as preventing any possible interruptions in services.
- With a view of building local capacities, the ET Cluster is by providing radio training to UNDSS and WFP staff.

Meetings

The next **Global ETC teleconference** will be held on **Wednesday 17 June,** 2015 at:

09:00	New York
13:00	UTC
13:00	Dakar / Conakry / Freetown / Monrovia
15:00	Rome
17:00	Dubai

Information

- Dedicated information-sharing space has been created on the ETC website: http://ictemergency.wfp.org/web/ictepr/emergencies2014/ebola-outbreak. Organisations involved in the ICT response are encouraged to share updates with the ETC community to support the overall coordination.

- **ETC services maps:**
  - Sierra Leone, Eastern Province: http://ictemergency.wfp.org/documents/10844/52cc236e-e812-4c35-9cd3-8b66dd4b03ba

- o Sierra Leone, Northern Province http://ictemergency.wfp.org/documents/10844/ac8fc465-b505-4645-8e08-0f2c6fc30c8b
- o Sierra Leone, Southern Province: http://ictemergency.wfp.org/documents/10844/1eea67cf-1381-4469-8f28-0bb05d53bfd3
- o Sierra Leone, Western Province: http://ictemergency.wfp.org/documents/10844/01d2c3b5-8e8a-4c1e-929b-ba4dcb118e35
- o Liberia: http://ictemergency.wfp.org/documents/10844/72f13b12-1580-4d80-91b5-196a027dabf6
- o Guinea: http://ictemergency.wfp.org/documents/10844/d9ae7197-78dc-4aa7-af41-2572a92d1735

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Acronyms

ET Cluster	Emergency Telecommunications Cluster
ETU	Ebola Treatment Unit
ICT	Information and Communications Technology
IMC	International Medical Corps
IT	Information Technology
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
NERC	National Ebola Response Centre
UNDSS	UN Department of Safety and Security
UNMEER	UN Mission for Ebola Emergency Response
UNMIL	UN Mission in Liberia

WFP   World Food Programme

All information related to ETC operations can be found on the website: www.ETCluster.org

For more information, to contact the team on the ground, or to be added or deleted from the mailing list, please contact: WestAfrica.ETC@wfp.org

Follow the ET Cluster's activities on Facebook and Twitter.

Background on the crisis:

In March 2014, a rapidly evolving outbreak of Ebola haemorrhagic fever started in Guinea. The outbreak subsequently spread to Sierra Leone, Liberia, Nigeria, Senegal and Mali. In August 2014, WHO and the government of Sierra Leone, Guinea and Liberia launched a joint US$ 100 million response plan as part of an intensified international, regional and national campaign to bring the outbreak under control. WHO also declared the Ebola outbreak in West Africa a Public Health Emergency of International Concern (PHEIC). In January 2015, an updated overview of needs and requirements for January-June 2015 was launched to outline the path to eliminate transmission and get to zero cases (estimated cost: US$ 1.54 billion).

Sources: ReliefWeb